

April 11, 2006

Fusarium Keratitis

Dear Colleagues:

An investigation is underway by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of cases of severe corneal infection (keratitis) due to the fungal agent, *Fusarium*. Following the report of a cluster in New Jersey, a total of 109 cases have been identified in multiple states, including Michigan.

Twenty-eight (93%) of patients interviewed to date indicate a history of soft contact lens use, and 26 of 30 patients interviewed recalled use of Bausch & Lomb (Rochester, New York) ReNu® brand contact lens solution or a generic brand solution manufactured by Bausch & Lomb. Twenty-nine percent of those interviewed have required corneal transplant.

Fusarium keratitis was recently reported among contact lens wearers in Asia beginning in February 2006, with Bausch & Lomb voluntarily suspending sales of the ReNu products in Singapore and Hong Kong. In press announcements today, the company has indicated they are suspending shipments of the product in this country also. CDC, and the Food and Drug Association, along with state and local health departments are seeking to determine if these cases in the US represent an increase in *Fusarium*-associated infections and if they are associated with the use of the Bausch & Lomb products.

Clinicians should report cases of *Fusarium*-associated keratitis to their state and local health departments. Clinical microbiology laboratories should report recovery of *Fusarium* from cultured corneal material to their local health department and to Dr. Kim Signs in the MDCH Bureau of Epidemiology at 517-335-8165. The *Fusarium* isolate should be submitted to the Bureau of Laboratories. Instructions for submission of fungal isolates can be found on the MDCH BOL website at: http://www.michigan.gov/mdch/0,1607,7-132-2945_5103_26138-15179--,00.html and scroll down to "fungal culture and identification".

See further details in the MMWR Dispatch on this subject, released 04/10/2006, at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm55d410a1.htm>.

Martha Boehme, MT
517-335-9654
boehmem@michigan.gov

James Rudrik, Ph.D.
517-335-9641
rudrikj@michigan.gov